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AMENDMENTS

In the Claims

The following is a marked-up version of the claims with the language that is underlined
("___") being added and the language that contains strikethrough ("——") being deleted:

1.   (Currently Amended) A communication method comprising:

receiving an instant messaging (IM) message from a first user to a second user;

prompting the first user for permission to convey the IM message to a third user;

determining whether the second user is currently engaged in an IM chat session with a
fourth user; and

indicating to the first user, in response to determining that the second user is engaged in
an IM chat session with a fourth user, that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session
with the fourth user. user;

prompting the first user to join the IM chat session;

in response to receiving an indication that the first user wants to join the IM chat session,
prompting the second user and the fourth user to allow the first user to join the IM chat session;
and

in response to receiving an indication that the second user and the fourth user want to
allow the first user to joint the IM chat session, facilitating joining of the first user to the IM chat
session.

2.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving an input from the first user, the input being indicative of the permission to
convey the IM message to the third user; and

conveying the IM message to the third user in response to receiving the input.

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3.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

indicating to the first user that the IM message is being conveyed to the third user.

4.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

indicating to the third user that the IM message originated from the first user.

5.   (Canceled)

6.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

waiting a predefined time interval prior to requesting prompting the first user for

permission.

7.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, further comprising:

indicating to the first user, in the absence of a response from the second user during the

predefined time interval, that the second user is unavailable.

8.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein requesting permission

from the first user is responsive to an absence of an input from the second user during the

predefined time interval.

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9.   (Currently Amended) A communication method comprising:

receiving an instant messaging (IM) message from a first user to a second user;

conveying the IM message to a third user;

determining whether the second user is currently engaged in an IM chat session with a

fourth user; ~~and~~

indicating to the first user, in response to determining that the second user is engaged in

an IM chat session with a fourth user, that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session

with the fourth ~~user.~~ user;

prompting the first user to join the IM chat session;

in response to receiving an indication that the first user wants to join the IM chat session,

prompting the second user and the fourth user to allow the first user to join the IM chat session;

and

in response to receiving an indication that the second user and the fourth user want to

allow the first user to joint the IM chat session, facilitating joining of the first user to the IM chat

session.

10.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9, further comprising:

indicating to the first user that the IM message is being conveyed to the third user.

11.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9, further comprising:

indicating to the third user that the IM message originated from the first user.

12.   (Canceled)

13.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9, further comprising:

further indicating to the first user, in response to determining that the first recipient is engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user, that an IM chat session is being established between the first user and the third user.

14.   (Currently Amended) A communication system comprising:

receive logic configured to receive an instant messaging (IM) message from a first user to a second user;

first prompting logic configured to prompt the first user for permission to convey the IM message to a third user;

determining logic configured to determine whether the second user is currently engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user; and

indicating logic configured to indicate to the first user, in response to determining that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user, that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session with the fourth user, user;

second prompting logic configured to prompt the first user to join the IM chat session;

third prompting logic configured to, in response to receiving an indication that the first user wants to join the IM chat session, prompting the second user and the fourth user to allow the first user to join the IM chat session; and

joining logic configured to, in response to receiving an indication that the second user and the fourth user want to allow the first user to joint the IM chat session, facilitating joining of the first user to the IM chat session.

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15.   (Currently Amended) A communication system comprising:

means for receiving an instant messaging (IM) message from a first user to a second user;

means for prompting the first user for permission to convey the IM message to a third user;

means for determining whether the second user is currently engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user; and

means for indicating to the first user, in response to determining that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user, that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session with the fourth ~~user.~~ user;

means for prompting the first user to join the IM chat session;

means for, in response to receiving an indication that the first user wants to join the IM chat session, prompting the second user and the fourth user to allow the first user to join the IM chat session; and

means for, in response to receiving an indication that the second user and the fourth user want to allow the first user to joint the IM chat session, facilitating joining of the first user to the IM chat session.

2009-04-27 21:32:21 (GMT)   14044202651 From: Tina Schafer

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16. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium that stores a program that, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform at least the following:

receive an instant messaging (IM) message from a first user to a second user;

prompt the first user for permission to convey the IM message to a third user;

determine whether the second user is currently engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user; and

indicate to the first user, in response to determining that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user, that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session with the fourth ~~user~~. user;

prompt the first user to join the IM chat session;

in response to receiving an indication that the first user wants to join the IM chat session, prompt the second user and the fourth user to allow the first user to join the IM chat session; and

in response to receiving an indication that the second user and the fourth user want to allow the first user to joint the IM chat session, facilitate joining of the first user to the IM chat session.

17. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 16, the program causing the computer to additionally perform at least the following:

receive an input from the first user, the input being indicative of the permission to convey the IM message to the fourth user; and

convey the IM message to the third user in response to receiving input from the first user.

18.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 17, the program causing the computer to additionally perform at least the following:

indicate to the first user that the IM message is being conveyed to the third user.

19.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 17, the program causing the computer to additionally perform at least the following:

indicate to the third user that the IM message originated from the first user.

20.   (Canceled)

21.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 16, the program causing the computer to additionally perform at least the following:

wait a predefined time interval prior to requesting the input from the first user.

22.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 21, the program causing the computer to additionally perform at least the following:

indicate to the first user, in the absence of a response from the second user during the predefined time interval, that the second user is unavailable.

23.   (Currently Amended) A communication system comprising:

receive logic configured to receive an instant messaging (IM) message from a first user

to a second user;

conveying logic configured to convey the IM message to a third user;

determining logic configured to determine whether the second user is currently engaged

in an IM chat session with a fourth user; ~~and~~

indicating logic configured to indicate to the first user, in response to determining that the

second user is engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user, that the second user is

engaged in an IM chat session with the fourth ~~user.~~ user:

first prompting logic configured to prompt the first user to join the IM chat session;

second prompting logic configured to, in response to receiving an indication that the first

user wants to join the IM chat session, prompt the second user and the fourth user to allow the

first user to join the IM chat session; and

joining logic configured to, in response to receiving an indication that the second user

and the fourth user want to allow the first user to joint the IM chat session, facilitate joining of

the first user to the IM chat session.

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24.   (Currently Amended) A communication system comprising:

means for receiving an instant messaging (IM) message from a first user to a second

user;

means for conveying the IM message to a third user;

means for determining whether the second user is currently engaged in an IM chat

session with a fourth user; and

means for indicating to the first user, in response to determining that the second user is

engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user, that the second user is engaged in an IM chat

session with the fourth user. user;

means for prompting the first user to join the IM chat session;

means for, in response to receiving an indication that the first user wants to join the IM

chat session, prompting the second user and the fourth user to allow the first user to join the IM

chat session; and

means for, in response to receiving an indication that the second user and the fourth

user want to allow the first user to joint the IM chat session, facilitating joining of the first user to

the IM chat session.

25.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium that includes a computer

program that, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform at least the

following:

        receive an instant messaging (IM) message from a first user to a second user;

        convey the IM message to a third user;

        determine whether the second user is currently engaged in an IM chat session with a

fourth user; and

        indicate to the first user, in response to determining that the second user is engaged in

an IM chat session with a fourth user, that the second user is engaged in an IM chat session

with the fourth user. user;

        prompt the first user to join the IM chat session;

        in response to receiving an indication that the first user wants to join the IM chat session,

prompt the second user to allow the first user to join the IM chat session; and

        in response to receiving an indication that the second user wants to allow the first user

to joint the IM chat session, facilitate joining of the first user to the IM chat session.

26.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 25, the program

causing the computer to additionally perform at least the following:

        indicate to the first user that the IM message is being conveyed to the third user.

27.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 25, the program

causing the computer to additionally perform at least the following:

        indicate to the third user that the IM message originated from the first user.

28.   (Canceled)

29.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 25, the program

causing the computer to additionally perform at least the following:

further indicate to the first user, in response to determining that the second user is

engaged in an IM chat session with a fourth user that an IM chat session is being established

between the first sender and the third user.

30.   (New) The computer readable medium of claim 25, further comprising prompting

the fourth user to allow the first user to join the IM chat session.